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by Frank Getlein

PRIVATE LIFE

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The Russian Orthodox Church

by Helene Iswolsky

Second in a Series on
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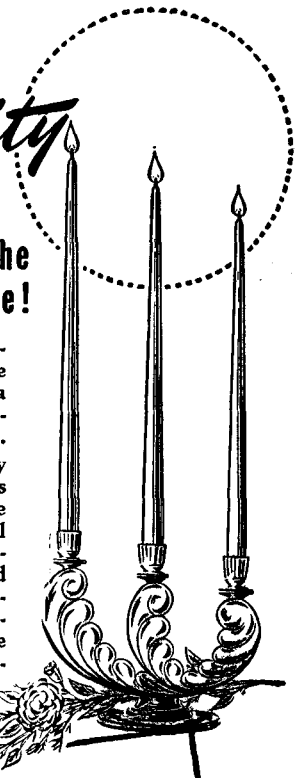

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

DISARMAMENT TALKS

IT IS POSSIBLE that Russia and the West may be able to reach some kind of limited agreement on disarmament. There exists at this time no more than that—a very seriously qualified possibility. Yet the desire for peace is so strong among all the peoples of the world that just the chance of an arms agreement has aroused a feverish excitement.

It all began some weeks ago when Russian representatives, at the United Nations disarmament conference in London, reversing Moscow's previous dismissal of President Eisenhower's "open skies" proposal, offered a plan of their own, based on the Eisenhower principle. Their proposal called for opening up for inspection all the United States west of the Mississippi, Alaska and most of Western Europe. In return, they would permit air inspection of a narrow strip of western Russia, the Siberian wastes and parts of Eastern Europe. The gross disproportion in the importance of the territories to be inspected by Russia and the West suggests that the proposal, at least in its specifications, was not meant to be taken seriously. But the shift in Russian attitude seemed to indicate that the Soviets were willing to open discussions on the question of disarmament.

In a mood of "cautious optimism," United States delegate to the conference Harold E. Stassen returned to Washington for further instructions. Statements by the President and Secretary of State Dulles indicated that they share Mr. Stassen's feeling, and are convinced that the United States should demonstrate its willingness to take at least "one small step" toward reducing the tempo of the arms race. Many other Americans, however, including Admiral Radford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have grave misgivings about arms agreements with the U.S.S.R. "We cannot trust the Russians on this or anything," said the Admiral. "The Communists have broken their word with every country with which they ever had an agreement."

Mr. Stassen flew back to London with a United States counter-proposal, involving air reconnaissance of territories more acceptable to the West, but the wisdom of the whole enterprise is still very much under discussion.

Is Russia sincerely interested in arms reduction and averting the disaster of a third world war, or is the disarmament proposal intended merely for propaganda purposes? We cannot know. Admiral Radford spoke only the truth when he cited the record of Russian bad faith. But even if this is simply another propaganda tactic, we cannot afford to let it be used against us. World opinion is a potent weapon in the cold war, a weapon the Russians are past masters at using. It would never do for the United States even to seem to be uninterested in peace, and in putting an end to the armament race. We must show the world our eagerness to make every effort to establish peace.

EVEN IF the Russian disarmament proposals are offered seriously, however, we may be sure that they are made only because Russia believes a disarmament agreement would not only be advantageous to the Communist cause, but more advantageous than it would be for the West. And here is where we must prove that our intelligence, our good sense, our understanding of the world situation are not inferior to the Russian.

Our representatives must bargain with their Russian opposite numbers in a difficult and complex game, where the stakes are literally life or death. The disarmament talks are even now being exploited by Communist organs all over the world to

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prove the peace-loving nature of Communism and the warmongering of the West. And aside from propaganda value, the significance of every aspect of the Russian proposals must be weighed with exhausting care. Whatever the U.S.S.R. will agree to—territorial inspection, nuclear weapons restrictions, armed forces reductions—will be agreed to because Moscow believes it will strengthen its position in the struggle against the West. Already the mere mention of troop withdrawals and nuclear weapons limitations has had serious political consequences, in Germany and France especially, threatening the unity of the Western alliance.

If disarmament measures enable us to reduce the enormous burden of military expenditures on the United States economy, we may be sure that the Soviets calculate their economic advantage will be even greater. If an arms agreement seems to offer the West advantages in security against attack, it is to be taken for granted that Russia perceives a greater military advantage for herself.

This is the context in which the West must operate—careful always not to close the door on any chance for progress toward peace, but cautious, deliberately weighing advantages to the West against the advantages to Russia. This will not be an easy task, but we must undertake it, and we must succeed at it.

It is not impossible that a realization of the horror of a nuclear war has touched even the leaders in the Kremlin, that they have therefore discarded not the dream of conquest, but the idea of conquest by means of bombs. These disarmament talks might signal the painful beginning of the era of peace the world longs for, but we must make no presumptions. We can only concentrate on this difficult, dangerous, but very important "one small step."

NEXT WEEK

HARRY SCHWARTZ analyzes conditions in Latin America and the strength of Communism there.

". . . the land tenure system in most of these countries is ideal from a Communist point of view . . . The standard Latin American type, the rich landowner who divides his time between Paris, London and New York, living on his income from the land which he rarely sees, is in vivid contrast with the desperately poor Latin American peasantry."

MORALITY AND LAW

THE FINAL verdict in the case of Arthur Miller must necessarily be of importance to the entire nation, but it should hold particular interest for those who realize that the claims of conscience must sometimes be asserted against other claims upon the individual. For there is just such a conflict in the present case of Mr. Miller, the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright.

Mr. Miller has been found guilty of contempt of Congress because he has refused to answer two questions before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He has freely answered all questions about his own relationships with Communists, but the two questions he will not answer concern others he saw at meetings of Communist writers in 1947. Mr. Miller refuses to name these people on grounds of conscience.

In finding Mr. Miller guilty of contempt Judge Charles F. McLaughlin, who presided at the trial without jury, ruled that "however commendable may be regarded the motive of the defendant in refusing to disclose the identity or the official position of another with whom he was in association, lest said disclosure might bring trouble on him, that motive and that refusal have been removed from this court's consideration."

The Court further ruled that the questions were relevant to the inquiry of the Committee. Regardless of Mr. Miller's motives, he was held legally responsible for answering the questions and guilty of contempt for refusing to do so. In support of this decision the court cited the ruling in a similar contempt case, Watkins v. United States. This ruling of the Watkins case is now before the Supreme Court.

Whatever the final legal decision in the Watkins case or the Miller case, no one should think that there is an easy and automatic response to the issues.

In their fight against Communism, Americans realize once again how important are the rights and freedoms of the individual in a democracy. These rights and freedoms are placed in jeopardy by the recognized evil that is Communism. But they have also been minimized or abused by those who would not grant their full application to Communists within the United States, or to those who apparently defend Communists. Many sincere Americans, for instance, fail to see that a defense of the democratic rights of American Communists is a defense, not of Communism, but of democracy.

In refusing to answer two questions put to him,

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Mr. Miller is not defending himself. He is not charged with being a Communist, and he has testified about his own activities at the Communist meetings in question. Nor is he defending Communism. He is defending the right of the individual to follow his conscience. Some will deny that, when faced by the demands of the State under existing circumstances, Mr. Miller can rightly do so. But one then reaches the great, thorny question at issue —how far can one surrender the claims of conscience to the State as it functions through the agency of Congressional committees? And who would dare hope that the Supreme Court has a ready answer to this question?

CHINA TRADE

HOW DIFFICULT it is to gauge public opinion in other countries is only too well illustrated by the course of Anglo-American relations during the past six months. The British still resent our surprising reaction to their mad Suez adventure. They have embarked on an increasingly independent tack; their unilateral scaling down of armaments and NATO commitments came next. Now this country is confronted by their present move to end the allied embargo on trade with China. And just as their descent upon Suez took place at such a time that it dampened world revulsion against the Soviet Union for the ruthless subjection of Hungary, so now it goes dead against American policy, and alienates the electorate, at a moment when the Eisenhower Administration is sore beset to get Congressional authorization for its budgetary appropriation for foreign aid.

In placing Communist China and its satellites on the same footing as the Soviet Union as far as British and sterling-area exports are concerned, Britain to all extents and purposes has ended the free world's embargo of China on "non-strategic" goods: Japan, West Germany and others are expected soon to follow. The industrialization of China will therefore be able to proceed without the costly haul from East Europe and the U.S.S.R. which proved to be such a burden to the Russian and Chinese transportation systems. Henceforth the embargo of the United States will be largely ineffectual. Mao's China appears to be rescued from its severe anxieties about present economic stringencies. Observers also feel that, with the abrogation of this embargo "differential" between the U.S.S.R. and China, recognition and admission to the UN have come several steps nearer.

There may well be a certain inevitability about this change, which was another result of Britain's own economic difficulties. But what has the alliance to show for agreeing to such concessions? Does China appear to be any less of a threat to South Korea, Viet Nam or Southeast Asia generally? Is there any change in status for the American prisoners, still retained as hostages in Chinese hands? In other words, an opportunity for bargaining with one of the few real weapons in the free world's possession appears to have been lost in a British effort to reduce economic pressures.

It seems to us to be a mistake to try to put a good face on this development. The penchant for acting independently is actually a sign of weakness in the alliance. At the present stage of the cold war whatever strengthens China's war-making potential is a loss that cannot conceivably be balanced by deliveries of any desired Chinese goods. To minimize the immediate and tangible effects of this new move is hardly sufficient to gloss over the fact that America's China policy—such as it was—has suffered a defeat with few if any compensations.

MANY'S THE SLIP

WHY IS IT that in the most controversial cases certain private utilities and their friends at court operate in such a way as to arouse widespread suspicion? Is it that they are egregiously inept or that they resort to subterfuge in order to obtain special privileges? The Hells Canyon case inevitably brings to mind Dixon-Yates. The Idaho Power Company, which apparently had won its fight against public power to build three low dams along the Snake River, applied for the "fast" tax amortization write-off which the Government granted in wartime as an incentive to construct facilities not profitable in times of peace. This would allow a company to deduct almost two-thirds of its construction costs from its taxable income in its first five years.

The write-off, estimated to be worth $83,000,000 to the power company, was granted by Dr. Gordon Gray, chairman of the Office of Defense Mobilization, who failed to tell the Byrd subcommittee before which he was appearing that Secretary of the Interior Seaton had advised against it (but instead quoted former Secretary McKay in its behalf). The hope is, for this and other reasons, that as with Dixon-Yates enough moral indignation will be generated to have the order rescinded—if not to reopen the whole Hells Canyon controversy.

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COMPULSORY SCHOOL

A MILESTONE in a year-long legal battle was reached recently when a court in Missouri handed down an important decision in a school case. At issue was the state's first compulsory school attendance law, involving a mother who refused to enroll her daughter in the local public schools, charging that they turned out "trained seals." A former music teacher, she insisted on her right to tutor her child herself and once spent a few hours in jail when a lower court rejected her claim. That official decision against the mother has now been overturned by the Circuit Court, which ruled that the private tutoring the child was receiving was in fact "substantially equivalent" to that of the public schools and that the mother was legally free to continue to teach her own child.

This decision of the Circuit Court was, we think, a good one. Some people may fear that rulings like this will encourage the neglect of children's education by the parents. We see no real grounds for such fears. The court simply ruled that the child in question was receiving an education "substantially equivalent" to that she would have received in school; the law can still be invoked against any parent who fails to see that his children receive such an education. In no sense should the court's decision be treated, as these things sometimes are, as a ruling that "went against" the public schools. It did not. It did not question the duty of the state to provide free and public educational facilities; it did not deny the right of the state to establish certain educational standards which must be met. What it did was to emphasize the primary role of the parent—not the state—in the education of the child. Thus the decision by the Missouri court was quite in keeping with American tradition, which has always respected the rights of parents and rejected any effort by the state to make attendance at one particular kind of school compulsory for all.

YOUNG REFUGEES

THE PLIGHT of the refugees from the Hungarian massacre must be impressed once again, upon the United States, which has so often stumbled in its efforts to aid these people. There are among the refugees still crowded in Austrian camps many children and adolescents. And of these many are "unaccompanied" by parents or other relations. Distrustful and fearful they move from camp to camp, providing for themselves as best they can within the cramping limitations of overtaxed facilities and meager supplies.

These young people, warns a Vienna psychiatrist, face the threat of severe mental illness if they are not soon cared for. The conditions of their existence are psychologically too strenuous to be long withstood. They need assistance soon. There is a United Nations committee of twenty-one nations which is considering the problem, but some Americans have already suggested that, even by itself, the United States should have at least a partial answer.

MICKEY COHEN ON TV

EVERYONE except Mickey Cohen seems to be sorry for what he said about the two Los Angeles police officers on Mike Wallace's TV interview show. A vice president of the American Broadcasting System has already apologized on a coast-to-coast hook-up on behalf of the network, Mike Wallace, and Philip Morris cigarettes, sponsors of the show, and the network has offered the two police officials equal time to make any reply they wish to the ex-racketeer's charges. Nonetheless, the men named are reported to be planning libel suits, both civil and criminal, against all concerned, and a formal complaint has already been filed by them with the Federal Communications Commission.

We do not have the slightest idea how this will all come out, but what we particularly regret is the possible effect of the incident on the industry. Television has to contend with sponsors, and so far these have been able to dominate program-content in a way no respectable magazine or newspaper would tolerate from any advertiser. As a result, television has tended to regard anything more controversial than the Cinderella story with considerable trepidation, and the new medium has never really explored its possibilities—a fact evidenced, it seems to us, by the enthusiastic popular response given to the Mike Wallace show in the first place.

Now the danger, of course, is that the Mickey Cohen incident will drive television even further away from reality. We would hate to see this happen, and we do not think it has to, if only television officials will realize that TV's critics are asking for maturity, not sensationalism; for responsible reporting, not scandal-mongering. In public affairs TV has a lot to learn from the country's good newspapers; as we see it, though, the lesson it needs cannot be learned from *Confidential* magazine.

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Art and the Church

"THE CHURCH IN AMERICA IS BLESSED WITH AN UNHEARD-OF PROSPERITY, YET ITS ART IS WHAT WE SEE"

FRANK GETLEIN

THE SITUATION of art in the Catholic Church in America is a sad one. This statement hardly requires proof but its truth can be demonstrated by the most cursory examination of the art objects installed in almost any parish church or cathedral, convent or seminary, kindergarten or university, or by the most intensive effort to buy a piece of decent art in the vast majority of the "Catholic Supply" stores anywhere in the country. It has been put forth in defense of the surprisingly bad art connected with the Church that meat and potatoes are more important than finger bowls, that the Church in America has been, and is, engaged in a building program of vast proportions and over-riding importance and that, no doubt, when the necessities are achieved the "luxury" of decent religious art will follow. This rationalization would make sense if, for reasons of economy the American Catholic community were, in fact, erecting churches and schools without art of any kind. But the truth is that the new buildings are being fully furnished with stained glass, statuary, wall decorations and decorative details most of which are atrocious and all of which cost at least as much as authentic art made for the same purpose.

The question of religious art, moreover, is much closer to the essentials of faith, in so far as these are manifest in the actual members of the Church, than is often supposed. While the Creed, the efficacy of the Sacraments and the hopes of Heaven remain the same in any language and in every period, Catholics whose operating notion of the Faith stems exclusively from these essentials have always been few. Most people take their impressions of any complex reality largely from the circumstances in which it is encountered. The visual impact of American church decor is not to be underestimated as a factor in shaping the Church itself as it exists in actuality.

The inescapable image of the Church reflected in the actual churches of our time and place is quite different from the true image of the Church. Church art shows the Church to be sentimental, superstitious and totally lacking in any notion of form. Historically, as we know, and certainly philosophically, the Church rigorously rejects sentimentality, fights superstition, and reveals a more exquisite sense of form than any other historical institution.

A brief look at how we got into the present deplorable situation may shed some light on how to get out. From five hundred to four hundred years ago the Church, from any point of view, was severely tried. The unity of the Faith was threatened by violent and multiplying heresies in the north of Europe. Islam was thrusting from the south as it never has since. High ecclesiastics treated their offices as steps to wealth and power and did not hesitate to blur the sharp edge of the Faith itself in such pursuits. Yet the golden generation of artists devoted its genius to the Church and produced in Italy a monument of religious art which is still a wonder of the world. The contemporary American Church is blessed with an unheard-of prosperity, threatened from without by little more serious than Paul Blanshard and endowed with a clergy of a probity all too rare in ecclesiastical history. Yet its art is what we see. This see-saw of history is not an argument for corrupt clergy on the grounds that they're likely to have better taste. On the contrary, it was the magnificence of Renaissance church art that was partly responsible for what we have today.

THE MIND OF the Church has never established Aquinas, for all his excellence, as a stone wall surrounding religious thought. But for all practical purposes the painting of Raphael did become the last word and, at any rate, the only word allowed to be spoken in religious art. Raphael himself was an authentic artist engaged not in producing Raphaels but in translating, clarifying and making incarnate a vision of God and man in his own language of color, form and composition. But the imitation Raphaels who have been producing the bulk of Church art ever since do not have Raphael's artistic vision, however total their personal commitment to the same theology. At best their work has appeared archaic and antiquarian, doing

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much to create or enforce the idea of the Church as a venerable but lifeless relic. The fact is, however, that no really good artist can be a continuation of Raphael and nothing more; good artists not being available, the job has generally been done by hacks with the result we know. The "Raphaelesque" in religious art is an insult to the name.

In America the situation is further complicated by a phenomenon completely foreign to the Church's European experience, namely the lack of any widespread artistic appreciation, which is characteristic of an immigrant Church.

Furthermore, while European ecclesiastical commission-letting was often in the hands of the local prince, who had or could hire taste, in America this aspect of the practical Church has been almost completely in the hands of those whose training has not encouraged them to seek advice in such matters. Thus as more money becomes available the commissioning pastor's nostalgia for his lost youth operates with ever fewer of the restrictions which economy once imposed and which resulted in an occasional inadvertently clean design. The grand climax of this element is the Byzantine wedding cake now under construction in Washington as the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

The approach to religious art epitomized in the Shrine has always been more blatant in Church architecture than in painting and sculpture but in all probability the Washington "monument to Catholic bad taste" will be the last of its ignoble line. Rapidly increasing construction costs are on the point of forcing a certain functionalism in architecture upon a reluctant clergy. While the spirit remains not only willing but eager for the most outrageous available sham Gothic, the flesh of the fraudulent flying buttress becomes all but prohibitive. On the other hand one can still buy vapid religious sculpture, glass and painting for only a little more than honest work.

THE CHURCH at large is undergoing a vast rehabilitation in this century. On the one hand there is the engagement with secular reality that is indicated by a whole chain of events running from the publication of *Rerum Novarum* to the grappling with the temporal order symbolized by the worker-priests in France. On the other hand there is the steady effort to emphasize the Church itself as a Christian community in which the continuing relationship between God and man is the central fact in the lives of its members.

This remarkable period of growth has not been without growing pains, and zeal for reform in Church art has produced a kind of "answer" to Raphaelism that is just as bad and in some ways worse than the condition it is proposed to cure. This is that style of religious art which may be called neo-Egyptian, and which is characterized by large staring eyes, gaunt features, flat figure treatment, decorative drape and the use of words as compositional elements. Obviously there's nothing wrong with any one of these notes nor with all of them together, but when enlisted as *the* manner of Christian art they can lead to the same sterility as Raphaelism. Moreover, the technical demands of neo-Egyptian religious art are considerably more modest than those of Raphaelism. The suspicion is unavoidable that the chief unacknowledged source of the manner is the simple fact that Catholic art curricula do not include life classes. Painting, properly so called, is all but nonexistent in the new manner. Most of the work is simply colored drawing. The word "hieratic" is often used as a laudatory adjective by the neo-Egyptians speaking of their work. "Stiff" would be more accurate.

The basic theory of the new manner represents a much more serious threat to a fruitful relationship between art and religion than that presented by lingering Raphaelism, even though the latter still appears dominant thanks to the long-standing patronage by the present generation of pastors of the art factories of Barclay Street, San Sulpice and Rome. Pastoral Raphaelism is based on ignorance, possibly invincible, but its attitude toward art is favorable. The position is that of a man who likes to eat but has never encountered anything but canned synthetic meats. The young Egyptians have serious doubts as to whether the idea of eating is compatible with the dignity of man.

In the great centuries of religious art, painting and sculpture were regarded as the handmaids of religion, their specific duties being instruction and edification, their actual achievement being infinitely beyond the implications of either of those words. The neo-Egyptians would sack the handmaiden and install a machine to do the job. An element of Puritanism is present not only in the totally unemotional, uncomplicated and uncraftsmanlike drawings of the hierats, but especially in their theory. On examination it is clear that the theory, intended to restore art to the service of the Church, actually demolishes the possibility of such service. The fear is that the authentic piece of art, by definition an end in itself, will detract from the higher purpose and the absolute end in itself which is God. Thus, more specifically, the Egyptians reject not only Raphael, (whose work most of them have never seen), but the whole glorious band of Renaissance painters on charges that the work in question glorifies itself at the expense of its religious subject and that the age glorified man at the expense of God. Concerning architecture, it is possible to find the opinion that early Gothic was the last legitimate ecclesiastical style and St. Peter's in Rome is blasphemous.

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MODERN PAINTING is also rejected by the theorists of the new manner. The grounds for rejection here are also based more on a convenient summing up of a period than on attentive looking at art. Modern painting is alleged to be materialistic and "fragmented," thus reflecting its century. As a matter of fact, the single strain common to all twentieth century painting is the deliberate destruction of the materialist attitude which characterized nineteenth century art. The Fauves, for example, abandoned the rather dim coloring of nature to create joyful scenes of the spirit; cubist painting ignores visual appearance in the search for inner form; the non-objective art of Kandinsky and Bauer explicitly manipulates color and shape for the sake of spiritual experience. The great contribution of the century in both the creation and appreciation of art is precisely the heightened awareness of composition itself, which, in a way, is a plastic equivalent of Catholicism's own concern with form.

Fortunately the whole choice in religious art does not lie between the platitudes of Raphaelism and the ineptitudes of the neo-Egyptians. Art for the Church is still being created in the same way it always has been, by the individual artist confronted with an individual vision of religious reality which demands to be made flesh in the materials with which he works and in the style he has fashioned from the coming together of vision and means. Always the same, the Church is nevertheless always different in succeeding ages and, indeed, in the hearts of individual Christians. So is its art. There is a fundamental kinship between the vision of the artist and the real vision of the Church. This kinship is unheard-of by what I have called Raphaelism and suppressed by what I have called neo-Egyptianism. But its existence explains not only the power of a modern artist like Georges Rouault, but more pointedly the effectiveness of church art produced by non-Christian artists at Vence and elsewhere. In this country too there are artists of great strength concerned with the Christian reality, for example Rico Lebrun, whose masterpiece to date, an enormous and overwhelming "Crucifixion," was unable to find Catholic institutional housing, even as a gift, and is now the property of a state university in New York, and André Girard, whose recent compelling serigraph series "The Sayings of Jesus" was underwritten by a private foundation in Philadelphia.

Such men find the Christian vision through their activity as artists, not through watering down the past or proposing handy rules for the future. Such art will be procured for the physical Church only when it is prepared to hire such artists, when the uninformed commissioning agent, who consults those more knowledgeable than he about air conditioning and public address systems, turns to those who are informed about art.

THE HERMITAGE

(From the Irish of the 9th and 10th Centuries)

Grant me sweet Christ the grace to find—
Son of the living God!—
A small hut in a lonesome spot
To make it my abode.

A little pool but very clear
To stand beside the place
In which to wash men's sins away
In sanctifying grace.

A pleasant woodland all about
To shield it from the wind,
And make a home for singing birds
Before it and behind.

A southern aspect for the heat,
A stream along its foot,
A smooth green lawn with rich top soil
Propitious to all fruit.

My choice of men to live with me
And pray to God as well;
Quiet men of humble mind—
Their number I shall tell.

Four files of three or three of four
To give the psalter forth;
Six to pray by the south church wall,
And six along the north.

Two by two, my dozen friends—
To tell the number right—
Praying with me to move the King
Who gives the sun its light.

A lovely church, a home for God,
Bedecked with linen fine,
Where over the white Gospel page
The Gospel candles shine.

A little house where all may dwell,
And body's care be sought,
Where none shows lust or arrogance,
None thinks an evil thought.

And all I ask for housekeeping
I get and pay no fees;
Leeks from the garden, poultry, game,
Salmon and trout and bees.

My share of clothing and of food
From the King of fairest face,
And I to sit at times alone,
And pray in every place.

FRANK O'CONNOR.

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The Russian Orthodox Church

HELENE ISWOLSKY

INFORMED OBSERVERS of Soviet life, affairs and policies remain uncertain about the exact situation of the Orthodox Church in Soviet Russia. To be sure, many tourists, shown the sights of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and other cities of the U.S.S.R. report that they have visited churches in these main centers and have attended services in monasteries, cathedrals or even small parishes. These tourists report that the churches are full of pious and prayerful congregations, that the splendors of the Russian-Orthodox liturgy has impressed them, that the singing of the choirs is magnificent and deeply inspiring. A photo recently reproduced in American magazines shows a picture of Russian mothers bringing their babies to a collective baptism ceremony. Other pictures show churches with glistening cupolas and crosses, monks in their traditional robes, and priests fully vested.

All this, needless to say, points to the fact that there *is* such a thing as a recognized Church in the U.S.S.R. It would be useless to argue this truism. Some convinced anti-Communists still believe that all but a very few churches in the U.S.S.R. are closed, that most of them were torn down or closed forever, or else turned into storage houses and movie theaters. Such a situation did exist some twenty years ago. Since then, however, many things have been corrected and readjusted in Soviet Russia. These changes and readjustments did not happen overnight. The first symptoms on the new religious front appeared in 1937; not until the end of World War II was the Orthodox Church in the U.S.S.R. finally given official recognition by the Kremlin with the reinstatement of the Patriarch in Moscow.

The successive stages leading to this recognition are quite extraordinary. First, the 1937 census of the Soviet population, in which the religious background of every citizen was also listed, revealed a surprising fact: some seventy-five per cent of the peasant population, and some fifty per cent of the city population fearlessly stated that they were baptized Christians and still professed their faith. This public profession of a faith which had been persecuted for twenty years is an amazing fact which was noted with deep satisfaction throughout the Christian world. And it deeply disturbed the Soviet government, the Communist Party and the "Godless Union" which had been specially assigned the task of wiping out religion in Russia.

The leader of the "Godless Union," Emelian Yaroslavsky, wrote an extensive report in 1938 admitting his "mistakes." He stated quite clearly that the anti-religious policy advocated since the times of Lenin had *completely failed*. Yaroslavsky suggested milder and more prudent methods of dealing with "the opium of the people." From now on persecution of the clergy and of the faithful should be replaced by "persuasion." The anti-religious magazine *Bezbozhnik* was stopped; revolting caricatures and vulgar pamphlets against the Church vanished almost immediately. Yaroslavsky presented a clean slate, planning a "gentlemanly" campaign against religion, founded on "scholarly" discussions and "scientific" research.

EVEN BEFORE Yaroslavsky had finished, however, a new and far more dramatic crisis arose. In June 1941, Russia was invaded by Hitler. Communist slogans proved ineffective in meeting this attack; it was the "spirit of the army," described so well by Tolstoy, which finally stopped the Nazis in Russia. And the spirit of the army was actually the spirit of the Russian people: peasants, workers, young girls and boys, guerrilla fighters. They were motivated not by Communist slogans, but by a desire to defend their land, and they were ready to suffer for it. The suffering they underwent brought the Russian people closer to their roots, to the spiritual heritage of their fathers, to prayer and penance—to the Church. And so the Church was alive once more.

Surely, as has so often been pointed out, the Soviet Government was forced to admit this survival, and even to encourage it. But what was for the Kremlin a matter of expediency, was for the people a matter of life and death, not only physically, but spiritually.

The reinstatement of the Moscow Patriarch closed

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a long and tragic chapter of Russian Church history. In fact, after the death of Patriarch Tikhon in the first years of the Communist revolution, the Church had no official pastor, and only a token ecclesiastical government which was of no avail against the rising tide of persecution. During these tragic years, the Russian Church went underground. This is, no doubt, one of the most moving chapters of the story. Churches were closed, hundreds of priests arrested, deported, physically tormented, deprived of every means of subsistence. Housing, fuel, ration-cards and the right to work were denied them. The story of the priests, bishops and archbishops who were martyred, dying in concentration camps and jails of the White Sea coast remains to be told.

Those Christians in Russia who escaped direct persecution were called to save the Church through heroic and dedicated lives. Thus, for instance, many priests, forced from their parishes, continued to lead a sacramental life. They said Mass in underground chapels, heard confessions, brought Communion, administered baptism, the rite of marriage, and Christian burial, to thousands of Christians who clung to their faith in spite of Communist propaganda. Some of these underground apostles called themselves "the roaming priests"; they had no place to rest their heads, and went from village to village to minister to all.

These roaming priests were often helped by laymen, who knew enough about prayer, and especially the psalms, to be able to instruct the faithful and teach them the liturgy, even when the priest was absent.

Many icons, some of them of high artistic value, were saved and preserved by the roaming priests and their flocks. These icons were later placed once more in churches and monasteries, or hung on the walls of museums, where they are admired and even venerated.

IN SPITE OF these long years of struggle and confusion, the Church in Russia preserved not only its entire liturgy and Church calendar, but also, more important, dogma. The teaching of the Fathers, and the body of Russian-Orthodox theology emerged intact from the underground, and could therefore be also placed where it belonged, in the officially recognized Patriarchal Church reinstated in Moscow.

This meant, obviously, the restoration of the entire life of the *Ecclesia* in Russia. It meant permission granted for the opening of theological academies and seminaries in the U.S.S.R. It finally meant the reopening of churches throughout the Soviet Union. Anti-religious activities were limited to rather dull talks about science *versus* religion, and to some hideous exhibits in museums, now called "exhibits of religious history," featuring the horrors of the Inquisition and the sins of the Czarist clergy.

It might seem that the Church in Russia had won a decisive battle. But there still remained a certain puzzling and even painful question: how far did the Russian Church accept the position offered to her? Was this Church the victorious *Ecclesia* or a sort of religious fellow-traveler? The facts are these. The Russian-Orthodox Church, headed by its Patriarchs, first Sergius and then Alexis, did comply with certain fundamental laws put down in the Soviet 1936 Constitution.

According to this constitution, freedom of worship *was* proclaimed in Russia. But the documents made provisions for "freedom of anti-religious propaganda," and forbade "religious propaganda." This meant that religion could not be taught in schools, nor could there be any religion classes outside schools, except for adults in seminaries. Religious instruction of children was confined to what they could learn from their parents at home. No religious books could be printed except those necessary for worship. Though churches could be reopened, it was only if parishioners could meet the costs of repair, provide for priests and choir and pay the heavy taxes imposed on Church organizations. This explains the scarcity to date of churches open for worship in the U.S.S.R. True, many ancient religious buildings that have artistic or historic value have been carefully repaired in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, and other cities. But these buildings are government-supervised historic monuments, museums rather than living churches. Such is the case of the main Moscow cathedrals and of the two great cathedrals of Leningrad. There are, however, some churches open in Moscow, and quite a number in Leningrad and Kiev.

MANY OTHER obstacles continued and still continue to restrict religious life in Russia. But the main obstacle is the political pressure exerted by the Soviet rulers on the clergy, and especially on the Patriarch and his immediate assistants. Before his election to the Patriarchal throne, the Metropolitan of Moscow Sergius declared in an interview in 1927 that there had been *no* religious persecutions in the U.S.S.R. Members of the clergy, according to this statement,

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had been punished not because of their priestly functions, but because of their anti-Communist activities. This declaration, which had been provided for Sergius, shocked even those outside Russia who respected and even admired the Metropolitan of Moscow for his zealous and staunch defense of his Church. However, those who realize the tremendous pressure which was put upon this prelate are careful to abstain from judging his public act. It has been suggested by some well-informed commentators that by this declaration Metropolitan Sergius saved his Church from further persecutions.

Nevertheless, the price paid for this stabilization remains a heavy one. The Patriarch Alexis, who became the successor to Patriarch Sergius, has not been forced to make such obviously false statements. The times have changed, and the less said about persecutions of an allegedly "free church" the better. The Moscow hierarchy, however, has been continuously requested to make political statements concerning international affairs. The Moscow Patriarch's peace campaign is in content and even wording very much like the official Soviet slogans. But it should not be easy to question the pure intentions of prelates speaking on behalf of peace. Statements of these prelates condemning American bacteriological warfare in Korea, so often repeated at Communist peace congresses, are a quite different matter.

Usually these pious declarations are made by the Patriarch's closest assistant, Metropolitan Nicholas Krutizky, an able and brilliant man, expert in handling such official matters. In March 1956, the Metropolitan Nicholas received in Moscow the deputation from the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America. And it was the Metropolitan Nicholas who returned the call, visiting the United States last June. Speaking several foreign languages fluently, and presenting a stately and even handsome appearance, he is, *par excellence,* the official mouthpiece of the Moscow high hierarchy, both at home and abroad. It was he who answered a telegram when the tragic events in Hungary were taking place. The shrewd prelate answered that his Church was praying for "the solution of the crisis in the Near East," and was helping the Soviet government in the relief "of those who suffer in Hungary." It is indeed painful to quote statements from this politically approved ecclesiastic, which are put to shame by the Church of Silence.

Must we then draw the conclusion that this Church of Silence, so mysteriously manifest in most countries behind the Iron Curtain, no longer lives in the U.S.S.R.? Such a conclusion would do a grave injustice not only to Russia's millions of devoted Christians today, but also to those who came before to receive, at the height of persecution, a baptism both of water and of blood. To do justice to these people, to understand what the Church in Russia is truly like, one must probe beneath the visible layers of official manifestations. This probing requires not only patience and intuition, but charity.

If examined in the proper spirit, the reports of observers, tourists, deputations, and others who have recently been in Russia are valuable. From this point of view, the statement of the National Council of the Churches of Christ deputation is most enlightening and fair. This statement points out that the Church in Russia functions, thanks to an at least temporary accommodation with the State. It further points out that this Church is restricted in its life, especially because of the limitations put on religious education, that "there seems to be no interference with worship in the Church," that "congregations are large and devout in the relatively few available churches" and that "enrollment in the few theological seminaries that are open is at capacity." This last item of information implicitly contradicts the observation often made by visitors to Russia, including the Council of Churches deputation, that Russians who are still religious are mostly older people, women and the children they bring along with them. If this were so how would the seminaries come to be filled? True, these seminaries are few, but not as few as is generally believed. Many priests have come from an entirely new, young generation. Even among bishops, usually belonging to the older generation, there are men forty or fifty years old. In many districts of the U.S.S.R. dioceses have been restored. This means that the ordination of priests is now insured everywhere in Soviet Russia. Actually, however, ordinations were performed even during years of persecution, in the depths of the underground. Apostolic succession has not been interrupted in Russia. This succession, whose validity is recognized by the Catholic Church, is the cornerstone of Russian liturgical and sacramental life.

WHAT IS THE spirit of this Church, which has survived so amazingly after forty years of godless propaganda, persecution, terrorism and brainwashing? Here again, opinions vary. The pessimists declare that this is a puppet Church, a mere token, presenting gilded domes and cupolas, and monastic halls and relics, merely to impress visitors, or to placate the people. But if the Russian people had become irreligious, what need would there have been to placate them through ecclesiastical trappings? And would all these trappings be preserved just for a few hundred tourists admitted from time to time from abroad? Such questions should ward off hasty judgments and the criticisms of those who declare, without any clear proof or serious evidence, that the clergy in the U.S.S.R. is nothing but a state-controlled machine, an army of spies, sent out to hunt out the faithful. Such

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accusations are leveled against priests who, it is alleged, have betrayed the secret of the confessional. If such crimes were committed, by no means can they be generalized.

Recent tourists to Russia have described to us the long lines of faithful awaiting their turn for confession in the main Russian religious centers. According to these observers, confessions and Communions can be counted by thousands. Could a priest list *all* these penitents and give them a tag of political clearance or non-clearance? The very supposition is absurd. The more so, since, according to a tradition accepted in the Russian Orthodox Church, confessions can be public and collective in very large congregations, where the penitents cannot be heard individually. No names, no personalities, no political sins and party-line deviations could be heard in such public confessions. The very nature of this collective repentance and the crowded lines for Communion reveal the deep hunger, the Eucharistic hunger, of the Russian people.

It seems fair to see, beneath the layer of official statements, set-ups and trappings, tolerated as a matter of expediency, the true life of the Church in Russia. The miracle of it is not the restoration of the Patriarchate; it is the fact that the Patriarchate has a solid ground to stand upon. What would brilliant Metropolitan Nicholas be worth if there had not been thousands and thousands of plain Russian people eager for baptism, religious marriage, confession, the Eucharist, and a Christian burial? "Worship," states the National Council of Churches deputation, "is from birth to death, the task of the Church in Russia."

But worship, if it is merely formalistic, will not inspire one with hope for the rebirth and final liberation of Russia and the other countries behind the iron curtain. The sacramental life alone, and its continuity, arrests our attention.

According to the most recent surveys and reports, some fifty per cent of the Russians are Christians, some thirty per cent practicing their religion openly. This includes, beside the majority of Russian-Orthodox, many dissident sects, Old Believers, Baptists, Evangelical groups, as well as Lutherans from the Baltic States, Catholics from Poland, etc. There are also non-Christian groups, Jews and Moslems, who believe in the One God, and who have defended their faith with as much heroism as their Christian brothers.

A small fact, scarcely mentioned in the press but worth attention, was the recent publication of the Russian-Orthodox Bible in the U.S.S.R. And this Bible is, in fact, the official Russian version of the Old and New Testaments, as approved by ecclesiastical authorities before the revolution. For some, this may be only a "collector's item." For others, this is a heartening and truly providential manifestation of the Word of God at all times and in all nations.

THE SCREEN

PIED PIPER OF PIGGOTT

ELIA KAZAN'S films rarely fail to stir up a lively controversy. And his newest opus, "A Face in the Crowd," for which Budd Schulberg wrote the script from one of his own short stories, will do just that.

"A Face in the Crowd" is a lengthy diatribe on the evils of power—particularly the power of a charmer, a hillbilly entertainer whose sudden rise to popularity and power on TV is not accompanied by an equal rise in wisdom or standards. One has a feeling as he watches "A Face in the Crowd" that previous movies have covered this theme with greater impact: Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane" and Jose Ferrer's "The Great Man," in which newspaper and radio bigshots threw their weight around; Frank Capra's "Meet John Doe," in which the power of a man's naive charm was misused to deceive a gullible public. Even the climax of "A Face," with its central figure screaming in fear and anger in his deserted dining room, recalls the climax of George Stevens' "Giant" with its *nouveau riche* Texan ranting with frustration in the empty banquet hall.

This does not mean that "A Face in the Crowd" is entirely derivative. Elia Kazan is too good and powerful a director just to copy. Furthermore Budd Schulberg has written a lively and interesting screenplay that makes a penetrating analysis of Lonesome Rhodes, the guitar-playing vagrant who gets his start on radio in Piggott, Arkansas, rises to TV with his folksongs and homespun philosophy, and then goes on to the big time in New York where he becomes a national idol.

In this his first movie, Andy Griffith plays the lead role magnificently, successfully suggesting (as he did so well on the stage in "No Time for Sergeants") a wholesome hillbilly charm and an interest in the underdog, but also allowing the real Lonesome Rhodes to come through—the self-centered man who bitterly resented the affairs of his mother with a long series of "uncles," and who is pugnaciously determined to get ahead no matter how he uses the associates who helped him and the fools who worship him and his show. Kazan gives us too much of Griffith during the course of this long movie, but there is no denying the excellence of the portrayal. Griffith slowly makes Lonesome Rhodes change, during the film's span of some two years, from the cute, boyish, backwoods nobody, who soon discovers the winning appeal of his homely patter, to the gross, almost repulsive man whose low standards, loose morals and puffed-up sense of power are quite evident.

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One of the picture's failings is that too much time is spent with this dictator-minded hero who misuses his influence. The other characters are rather skimpily sketched in, except for the role of the radio woman who discovers him in the Piggott jail and gives him his first break. Patricia Neal plays this role expertly in a many-faceted performance of a woman who is taken in by Rhodes' down-to-earth philosophy and charm, who goes along with him after she discovers his persuasive appeal, who even gives herself to him when she thinks she is losing him, who is pleased when he proposes marriage after they get to New York, who is angry when his small-town wife turns up, who is hurt and furious and disgusted when he marries the teen-age winner of a baton contest ("This is the culmination of the romance between Lonesome Rhodes and his mass audience.") and who finally, although somewhat reluctantly, revolts when he goes into politics and considers himself a President-maker.

Director Kazan probably edited his picture greatly after it was finished and lessened the footage that was once devoted to the other characters. His supporting cast is good, especially Percy Waram as the pill manufacturer whose product Rhodes sells on TV and whose Presidential aspirant Rhodes hopes to make over and sell; Marshall Nielan as this ambitious though mediocre Senator who is willing to give Rhodes a cabinet post in exchange for his support; Paul McGrath as an advertising agency man who hates Rhodes' guts but can't resist his TV rating; Lee Remick as the pretty girl who wins the baton-twirling contest and Rhodes without too much trouble. Outstanding in this large cast are Walter Matthau, as an author who soon gets wise to what Rhodes is up to, and Anthony Franciosa, as Rhodes' manager who sees through his boss but doesn't care as long as he gets his own cut; unfortunately neither of these good actors has sufficient opportunity to do his best—either because the roles were underwritten or were later cut.

Except for the author played by Matthau, the people in "A Face" are a pretty unsavory lot and this portrait of them is definitely on the cynical side. While it is well known that TV and movie audiences are gullible fans of actor-type personalities, it is hard to believe that sixty-five million people are really followers of this "slob" (as Patricia Neal characterizes him). Although Griffith gives Rhodes, at least at the beginning, a warm appeal and a homey attitude "on screen" that goes well with his pleasant singing voice, it is doubtful whether so many Americans would fall under his spell. Then again, demigods have risen to power and didn't have much more to offer than Lonesome Rhodes.

The picture would have been strengthened if it were shorter and sharper, and if it did not vacillate so abruptly between hilarious comedy and very serious subject matter. When Rhodes gets involved in national politics, he gets out of hand, and the picture loses direction. The ending seems contrived, even though it has an analogue in life, for a similar incident once actually occurred on radio. But when "A Face in the Crowd" is at its satirical best, it is a very good best indeed. The scenes which show Rhodes putting the Piggott sheriff in his place, swaying a live TV audience, dumbfounding the Madison Avenue boys with his homely technique, starting to work on the Presidential-hopeful to give him a new personality, are all brilliantly done. Once again Kazan provokes his audiences into thought and makes them squirm. If "A Face in the Crowd" doesn't do anything else but cause them and the TV producers to realize their responsibilities, it has done a good job.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

THEATER AS PARADE

THE PEREMPTORY withdrawal of Mr. Norman Ginsbury's period piece, "The First Gentleman" (*closed at the Belasco*) was a commentary, not unjust, on the extravagant scandal of its production. Mr. Ginsbury's play belongs to the genre —always a precarious one—of drama as biography; his subject was that iniquitous dandy, the Prince Regent of England, whose portrait Thackeray drew with such glittering malice in *The Four Georges*. The gross nature of such a figure will not permit any investiture of the kind of moral sentiment and rhetorical dignity which suffuse, for example, "Victoria Regina," that other drama of royal biography, and Mr. Ginsbury adopted for his chronicle a tone somewhat absent and dry, a posture of melancholy witness to a spectacle of folly. Nor was "The First Gentleman" wanting in panache or an intermittent bite of language; what it seemed void of, rather, was any trajectory of dramatic action. Mr. Ginsbury evaded the obvious, though richer, substance of the Prince Regent's liaison with Mrs. Fitzherbert, to focus on the genteel acrimony of a lesser conflict with his daughter, the Princess Charlotte. The relation of this incident to English history is only peripheral, and permits Mr. Ginsbury to do little more than elaborate a study in Georgian monarchy.

The private authority of personality might conceivably propel such random details of portraiture into unity, and there was a visible point of view behind Mr. Walter Slezak's rosily fatuous playing of the Regent. Yet one rarely felt, in this parade of preening self-indulgence, the romantic dream, the phantasies of

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luxury and power, which provoke such ostentation. And in this sacrifice of meaning, dramatic and historical, to decor, Mr. Slezak was at one with Mr. Tyrone Guthrie, who allowed whatever tension may have flickered in "The First Gentleman" to expire beneath a smothering opulence of production. Mr. Guthrie's playboy sportiveness, his irresistible impulse to resort to theatrical legerdemain when confronted with anything counter, original, or spare in a dramatic text, has become something of a menace; we have seen it variously diminish Shakespeare, Marlowe and Pirandello. (Mr. Virgil Thomson calls this, in music, "the wow technique.") There was perhaps no profound loss in "The First Gentleman" having suffered these misdirected attentions, but Mr. Guthrie's lavish cocoon did manage to obscure effectively whatever wit, asperity and observation Mr. Ginsbury may have brought to his subject.

I HAVE the curious sense of having anguished all this year with Eugene O'Neill, and I hope shortly to summon the energy and poise of spirit to cope with his last play, "A Moon for the Misbegotten," presently at the Bijou Theater. Much of the drama is a slag-heap of total recall and indiscriminately literal detail, but the third act suddenly dilates into one of those numinous scenes, flooded with the pathology of guilt, which are an infallible feature of O'Neill's later work.

RICHARD HAYES.

COMMUNICATIONS

"THE CONTROVERSIAL FIFTH"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I read with interest John Cogley's column [Apr. 26] entitled "The Controversial Fifth," which dealt with Mr. Dave Beck's use of the Fifth Amendment before the Senate rackets inquiry and the inferences that might be drawn from that use. Particularly interesting was Mr. Cogley's statement that "the circumstances of a Congressional hearing are special indeed and each case varies. Much depends on the nature of the implied charges, the character of the committee and its counsel, the real—as distinct from the nominal—purposes of the committee."

My own opinion of Mr. Dave Beck antedates by several years his appearance before Senator McClellan's committee; his appearance did not alter that opinion. Nevertheless, I am sorry that Mr. Cogley did not, as he so often does, cover an area of the dispute which, to my knowledge, has been universally ignored. Senator McClellan's opening statement, when Mr. Beck finally appeared, included the remark that the committee had evidence that Mr. Beck "may have misappropriated $320,000 of union funds." The charge could hardly be termed "implied" in this instance. Mr. Beck was then asked such questions as "Did you take $85,119.92 from union funds from the year 1949 to 1953 to pay for your own personal bills?" (The exact sum made the question rhetorical, and everyone got the idea.) To this and similar questions Mr. Beck answered by invoking the Fifth Amendment. As Mr. Cogley observes, the union leader "was under no obligation to assist the Committee in its attempts to prove him guilty."

From my neck of the woods "misappropriate" involves the concept of "wrong," and it is very likely that the nationwide television audience took Senator McClellan's remark as a bald charge of wrongdoing. The "nominal" duty of the committee, I presume, is to recommend legislation to plug loopholes in the laws governing labor unions. Without doubt there is need of such laws, just as there is a need for more stringent laws governing expense accounts and those multitudinous other means by which some American citizens do their ingenious best to live in a cool, tax-free utopia. . . .

Mr. Beck and what in these days would be called his "ilk" obviously live by a free and easy code: it is not Senator McClellan's code, nor Walter Reuther's nor mine. But we are a nation of odd saints and sundry sinners and who will claim the right to sort us out? . . . In the absence of laws thereon, one man's "misappropriation," is another man's luck. The recently cancelled junket for Congressmen to visit—at Air Force expense—some installations conveniently near to, and concurrent with, the Kentucky Derby could easily be termed "misappropriation" of Defense funds but the jolly Congressmen who were going to take advantage of the opportunity no doubt considered themselves in on a lucky thing. The only thing "wrong" with their plan was that someone found out about it. Every election time I receive campaign material from my Congressman bearing the pious legend that it has been printed at his own expense—but it rides through the mails free of charge by means of his franking "privilege." I cannot take off my taxable income expenses incurred in looking for a job. Frederic Coudert is lucky and I'm not.

Those who have been loud and vitriolic about the people who take the Fifth Amendment might well look at their own obligations concerning the slaughter of reputations. After all, as Westbrook Pegler once observed, every man's reputation is his own rag doll to do with as he pleases. But I don't see why it is a function of Congressional committees to be forever trying to kick our rag dolls apart at the seams.

JAMES GREENE.

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Joyce As Correspondent

RICHARD ELLMANN

AMONG THE public figures of his time James Joyce lived a uniquely private life. Shying away from the title and role of man of letters, he wrote little criticism; he never gave lectures; he belonged to no movement. His relations with other writers were either embarrassed, as with Yeats, or unliterary, as with Wyndham Lewis. Until he came to live in Paris in 1920, when he was thirty-eight, his friends were more often tradesmen or clerks than writers. Except for the opera and fashionable restaurants like Fouquet's, he kept himself aloof. He did not discourage the myth that sprang up about his hyperborean indifference and glum inaccessibility. But that it was only a myth is now clear. The more than four hundred letters which Stuart Gilbert has ably edited and graciously introduced in this handsome book (*Letters of James Joyce*. Ed. by Stuart Gilbert. Viking. $7.50.) show that Joyce was neither indifferent nor inaccessible. He was instead a man who depended upon relatives and friends, desired their good opinion, and shared in their troubles almost as much as he insisted they share in his.

The letters are written in Italian, German, and French as well as English, and in this and other ways they are the letters of an exile. Joyce took from the beginning a special posture for his correspondence, and rarely relaxed it. The undisturbed ebullience that he displayed with his intimates in conversation is not notable in his letters. There he adopts almost unyieldingly the position of victim. The reigning state of mind is that things are going badly and will probably get worse. Accepting gloom as his habitat, Joyce is lugubriously witty within it, disaster supplying him with some of his best effects. He writes his wife's uncle in 1915, "If I could find out in the meantime who is the patron of men of letters I should try to remind him that I exist: but I understand that the last saint who held that position resigned in despair and no other will take the portfolio."

Until he was thirty-five Joyce was poor and unsuccessful; after thirty-five he was successful and sometimes affluent. But by dint of extravagance he managed to recover his poverty sporadically, and new grievances came to him in the form of eye trouble, critical hostility to *Work in Progress,* and his daughter's mental illness. While he affected to regard these as his predestined lot, he actually combatted them with frenzied impatience. He went from eye doctor to eye doctor, from operation to operation. In dealing with the critics, though he wrote Miss Harriet Weaver that it was difficult for him to push his own wares, hardly any artist has been more skillful; and once, after describing some particularly elaborate maneuvers to secure favorable attention for his books, he tells her, "I am sure all this will seem very disingenuous to you but alas you must speak Helvetian to a Swiss is the experience of this *voyageur malgré lui.*" With the same restlessness, he moved his daughter from hospital to hospital, rejecting the diagnosis that she was incurable, fanatically bringing evidence to show she was only as mad as Cassandra, and even consulting Jung—whom he disliked—in the vain hope of making her well. And all the time, as he wrote to his friends, he kept writing his funny books.

HIS LETTERS fall into two groups, one assuming, the other casual. In the first group his certainty is from the start remarkable. The first letter in the book was written by Joyce at the age of nineteen to Henrik Ibsen; in it he praises the Norwegian for his accomplishments, but notes that "higher and holier enlightenment lies—onward," presumably with the young correspondent. It is understandable that the sender kept a copy and the recipient did not. With the same resoluteness Joyce refused to make most, if not all, of the changes in *Dubliners* which Grant Richards demanded of him, and asked: "If I eliminate them what becomes of the chapter of the moral history of my country? I fight to retain them because I believe that in composing my chapter of moral history in exactly the way I have composed it, I have taken the first step towards the spiritual liberation of my country." In a minor key, if Joyce is being ironical in signing an early letter asking George Roberts for money as "James Overman" (superman), he is also being insolent. The feeling of high dedication stands behind his constant demands on friends, reviewers, and readers. He allows himself to be importunate because he knows himself to be important.

Mr. Ellmann, who is on the faculty of Northwestern University, is well known for his critical and biographical studies of Yeats.

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There is evidence that Joyce was not inhumanly certain of himself, but that he adopted certainty to overcome the hesitations of others. With his most intimate friends he is less assured. Twice he writes to Miss Weaver to complain of his lack of imagination; in several letters he almost begs Frank Budgen to come to Trieste to help him with hints for *Ulysses*. During the composition of *Finnegans Wake,* when Miss Weaver ventured to express some doubts about his book, he fell into depression and illness and formed an elaborate, absurd plan to turn the book over to James Stephens to finish. Padraic Colum has noted that Joyce once wondered if he had waited too long to write *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. He does not say this in the letters; his confidence in each book seems to grow as it comes into being, but the letters make quite clear that the early stages at least were profoundly unsettled and insecure.

Yet if he had some doubts about his own work, he had graver doubts about that of his contemporaries. Soon after his arrival in Paris in 1920, he wrote Budgen, "I observe a furtive attempt to run a certain Mr. Marcel Proust of here against the signatory of this letter. I have read some pages of his. I cannot see any special talent but I am a bad critic." He does not praise his friends Pound and Eliot, although he admires *The Waste Land* enough to write a mild parody of it that begins,

> Rouen is the rainiest place getting
> Inside all impermeables, wetting
> Damp marrow in drenched bones.

He stopped most of his reading in his later years and relied on Sylvia Beach, Samuel Beckett, and other friends to keep him informed about current fashions in letters. His own tastes continued to run mainly towards Byron, Newman, and other writers of the *arrière-garde*.

AMONG THE casual letters, which comprise the bulk of the selection, the fullest are addressed to his patron, Miss Weaver, to whom he was bound by friendship and gratitude. Over many years he sends her a weekly account of his doings; he tries to quiet her skepticism about *Finnegans Wake* by explanations of passages, and takes a grim, statistical pleasure in counting out the number of hours of labor each section of the book has cost him. One can discern from the letters that she is patient, intelligent, and indulgent, obviously a central anchor in his fluid world. The most rollicking letters are to Frank Budgen, one of the few friends with whom Joyce felt altogether at ease. With Budgen he had passed long evenings at Zurich cafés, and his letters carry the convivial atmosphere onto paper. But the most moving letters are those addressed to his schizophrenic daughter, for underneath their deliberate high spirits we can sense the unhappy father doing his desperate best to cheer her up. Joyce's creative writings show him to have been astringent and complex, while his letters disclose that he was also simple and rather pitiable.

The letters demonstrate, too, that it is a mistake to suppose that after Joyce's flight from Ireland in 1904 his life became dull and uneventful. As his son George has remarked, "There was always something doing" at his father's flat. Biographies of Joyce have given the contrary impression, but the letters show the density and continuity of an unrelaxed life. There is a swirl of feelings brought on by a multitude of small emergencies. The points at issue may seem trivial, but Joyce brings up all his heavy equipment to handle them, and they become interesting. He lives through a war and a half, and ignores them, but he does not ignore the mixed loyalties of his acquaintances, the equivocations of reviewers. To mend his fortunes he employed a Renaissance ingenuity and courtliness, but his present fame dwarfs these machinations by which he was so fascinated. Under them, or rather immanent in them, however, are his two real interests, his family and his writings. These passions do not dwindle. Their intensity raises his little life to dignity and his letters to their indispensable place.

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A Modern Hero and His Enemy, War

THE BIG WAR. By Anton Myrer. Appleton, Century, Crofts. $4.95.

By DACHINE RAINER

THIS IS what many have been expecting since the last war. No *War and Peace,* but I doubt if it is possible to come very much closer at this time to an American *War and Peace* than *The Big War.* It is one of the most impressive war novels of this country—with the possible exception of Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage* the best. "Possible exception" only because while it is not as well written, nor as beautifully constructed as the early novel, it is a far more complex and ambitious work. Actually the writing *is* very good, and sustained, and although it is not a tone poem like Crane's, at times it possesses a remarkable degree of eloquence and intensity. It is a work in the grand manner, and because one must honor the courage of an artist for his scope as well as for the success of his intentions, I cannot overestimate the worth of *The Big War.*

The Big War is a big book, somewhere near 250,000 words. Divided into three parts, it tells the story of a squad of marines on leave, at sea, and finally in action in the South Pacific. Their families, backgrounds and current emotional involvements emerge during their last, five-day, before-shipping-out leave. By evoking our sympathies in this manner—in civilian settings familiar to us, and progressing to the barbarism of ordinary military life, and the psychosis of warfare—which here results in the death of all major participants save one—the reader becomes inextricably betrayed into a grim and moving identity with the feelings of the leading members of the squad. (This is not a spectacularly original device, but it works.)

The members of the squad cover an authentically wide range: a Brahmin Boston intellectual, an orphan Irishman, a sensitive, tough proletarian of Greek descent, an underage youth . . . and the author's ear is infallibly true, his dialogue exemplary, the action spirited. A good part of the events are seen through the eyes of the intellectual, Al Newcombe, in what must be partly personal memoir. The boy's classical education provides him with balance and perspective and serves, surprisingly, to sustain him in the ordeal of modern warfare. Newcombe's "inner" life, engorged by sophisticated perceptions, makes him deficient in both his capacity for loving, and his ability to "feel." Mr. Myrer is similarly exact and ingenuous in his other portraits; he treats the sexual experiences of the men with precision, and a degree of candor which some readers will find excessive.

This is the story of Danny Kantaylis, a hero in the traditional sense, with wounds and ribbons, but also a hero in the more complex sense. *Hero* is such a dangerous word to use, but there is, fortunately, no other, Actually, we have here a dual hero: a man, and a squad. First the man.

Danny, of Greek descent and with the stature of the legendary Greeks, is a moral human being, who succeeds in functioning, despite the coercive machinery of the military, as an individual of scrupulous conscience. In three separate incidents one finds him determined, after due reflection, to make and act upon his own decisions, whatever the consequences. After Danny's first term in the marines, wounded, decorated, and suffering from malaria, he is offered a goldbricking job of parading about the country on war bond drives, but refuses out of that sense of identity with his doomed generation which I have never been able to understand when I encounter it in either life or art, but which I respect as a compulsion as legitimate as any other.

Secondly, Danny learning simultaneously that he is to be shipped out and that the girl he is in love with is pregnant and wants marrying in a hurry, he goes over the hill, although he knows what this will cost him in rank etc. (On his return from being AWOL, one finds Danny thrust into a setting that in momentary confusion I mistook for a prisoner of war camp; it is merely the sadism of domestic brig life.) The hero's third act, which costs him his life, is the gratuitous one of going "beyond the call of duty," during the Pacific island fighting.

All three incidents, I realize, and so did Mr. Myrer, I'm certain, are stereotyped enough to present a real danger of falling into the category of the banal and sentimental. Mr. Myrer takes the risk and, miraculously, because there is a hard core to his talent, he makes his point: deliberately selecting those rapidly atrophying human values—tenderness, love, compassion, and the free functioning of will and intelligence—the novelist holds them aloft once more for our consideration.

As I've suggested, Mr. Myrer accomplishes still more: it is not the individual, but the squad—that ultimate receptacle of human values—which is the true hero of this work. The war is the enemy, for it is alien to those values the squad represents. The pity is in the situation: it is that each side finds it necessary psychologically to convince themselves that they are killing non-people.

The defects of Anton Myrer's book, although not in any great degree, are the same ones that plague Norman Mailer, or befuddled Theodore Dreiser, and that seem inescapable for anyone writing in the garrulous, sprawling tradition of naturalism. There is a lack of finish, a seemingly casual interest in the craft itself which many readers will find truly dismaying. Anton Myrer overcomes this to a very considerable extent, and also comes off with a highly pertinent series of observations for our time, on war and peace—the distinction between the two being so blurred in this century that intelligent comparisons and reflections must be welcomed.

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From Critic to Biographer

DAYS OF THE PHOENIX. By Van Wyck Brooks. Dutton. $3.95.

By JAMES STRONKS

THREE YEARS AGO, when he was sixty-eight, Mr. Van Wyck Brooks turned to autobiography with *Scenes and Portraits: Memories of Childhood and Youth.* It was a charming volume, graced by John Butler Yeats' appealing portrait of the critic as a young man, and dense with engaging details of a burgeoning career in letters.

Now appears a sequel, *Days of the Phoenix: The Nineteen-Twenties I Remember,* Mr. Brooks' dignified recall of the years when he was an editor of *The Seven Arts* and *The Freeman* and a townsman in that community of the arts, Westport, Connecticut. About these three centers he clusters sketches of half a hundred writers, editors, and artists whom he knew. Completely Brooksian, the portraits are cleverly woven of striking oddments of personality, ancedote and allusion—in exactly the manner of *The Flowering of New England* and its companion volumes in Mr. Brooks' vast, mellow "Makers and Finders" series.

There are close-ups of Albert Jay Nock, Paul Rosenfeld, Waldo Frank, Hendrik Van Loon, Brooks' intimate friends Randolph Bourne and Lewis Mumford, and shorter views of such varied figures as Alfred Stieglitz, Joel Spingarn, Constance Rourke, H. L. Mencken ("the rude forefather of us all"), and dozens of others—including a brief glimpse of Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald asleep at a dinner table following two days of partying. In Mr. Brooks' benign picture of this lively, sometimes disorderly, decade there is no jazz or gin, and very little sin. He chooses to be critical of nobody except the New Critics, who provoke him into puzzled ill humor.

In re-visiting his 1920's, Mr. Brooks occasionally pauses in his guided tour to speak of the artistic ideas which animated these creative people. He evokes the artistic excitement and the feeling of renaissance for which (though he does not say so) his own *America's Coming-of-Age* was the ringing herald in 1915. He analyzes the animus behind that harsh symposium of 1922, *Civilization in the United States,* recaptures the temper of the expatriates for whom it spoke, and explains the artistic necessity of their eventual homecoming to native roots. What he says on these subjects is sound and sincere, but it is not going to displace either Malcolm Cowley's *Exile's Return* or Frederick Hoffman's *The Twenties.*

By far the most remarkable part of this book is Mr. Brooks' unsparing account of a personal crisis following his publication of *The Pilgrimage of Henry James* in 1925. Harrowing doubts about the rightness of that severe and Procrustean study became an obsession with him and by 1929 had led to a nervous breakdown of four years' duration —a hideous season in hell in which, among other tortures, he was pursued by nightmares of a luminous-eyed Henry James. Now defending his original view of the novelist, Brooks expostulates with the New Critics, whom he calls Formalists, for overrating James' mastery of technique and structure and for tolerating the perverse values in James' rarefied and excessively mannered later fictions.

No doubt Mr. Brooks' recovery from the breakdown explains his title, for like the mythical bird reborn from its own ashes he returned confidently to a useful career. But more important, his ordeal helps us to understand the famous change in his tone and critical attitude after the twenties. To the disappointment of many in his generation, the challenging young critic of *Letters and Leadership* (1918), *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* (1920), "Literary Life in America" (1922), and *The Pilgrimage of Henry James* (1925) turned in the 1930's and thereafter into merely an appreciative, affirmative biographer.

Mr. Brooks' earlier role was the more stimulating one, but his learned and graceful performance since has been distinguished of its kind. Presumably we may look forward to more of it in an autobiographical volume yet to come.

Key to an Age

COMPULSION. By Meyer Levin. Simon and Schuster. $4.95.

By JEAN HOLZHAUER

THE EQUATION between the discoveries of poetry and the discoveries of psychology, however underscored by the borrowing of terms such as "Oedipus," is one not often fully acknowledged by the practitioners of either art. At the brink of total exploration of the last frontier, that called by Miss Helen C. White "the wasteland of our inner selves," courage is seen wanting in both the poet and the scientist.

The equation is re-demonstrated, however, in Meyer Levin's somewhat fictionalized account of the Loeb-Leopold case, *Compulsion.* While introducing episodes and some characters necessarily invented, Mr. Levin has relied on the record for the major part of his story, and is fortunate in that the record is so complete. From newspaper, court and psychiatric reports, and from his own obvious study and inventive power, which never fails in authenticity of tone, he is able to construct a coherent picture of a real and classic tragedy.

The Loeb-Leopold case was, without exaggeration, a key to our age. From the legal point of view, it was a major and successful introduction of mitigating psychological considerations into the judicial process. From the psychiatric point of view, the examination of the two boy-killers was far in advance of its time and place. Even from the literary point of view, the summary speech by Clarence Darrow, as defense attorney, was a combination of scientific mercy and poetic insight that surely must have been unique in

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the United States of 1924, and that stands today as a monument of intelligence applied.

Mr. Levin's announced intention in reviewing the story now is the hope of drawing from the case "some further increase in our comprehension of human behavior." Keyed at the low and unobjectionable pitch of documentary journalism, his account is nowhere more exciting than in the bare recital of test results during the prison examination of Leopold and Loeb (named, in the story, Judd and Artie):

"Of the standard intelligence forms, the results were predictable. Judd completed the Stanford-Binet so rapidly that the scale was not high enough to rate him. Artie's results were almost as phenomenal. The vocabulary tests and problem-solution tests were child's play for them. . . .

"But there were a few variants from the genius attainment.

"There was the silent-reading test, requiring a summary of what had been read. Judd again proved himself superior, but Artie, with his jumpy lapses of attention, left out salient points; his replies were more like those of a high school student than a college graduate.

"And in a co-ordination test, in which picture cutouts had to be put together, Judd, who might have been expected to excel, suddenly became confused, scoring only 56 out of a possible 100, a score for a twelve-year old child. . . .

"It was then that Storrs tried the set of pictures used in the thematic apperception experiment. There was a picture of a boy with one shoe on. Near him lay the matching shoe, an overshoe, a slipper. What did the picture suggest?

"With these and other pictures in the set, Artie and Judd produced stories hardly to be expected from young men of their age and seeming mental development. Artie at once decided that the boy might be putting on someone else's shoes, so as to leave false footprints. And on he went, in a childlike fantasy of crime. Judd ignored the little situation of the picture. . . . The boy was waiting for someone, he ventured. Something important was happening. A big decision was being made, and the boy was waiting, perhaps for his mother. It could be that there was an argument about him going on in the house. About where he should go to school. . . . Then Judd looked at Storrs cunningly, with the caught-on look of the test sophisticate."

Few readers today will fail to see, in these orderly revelations, the charting of paths in an interior territory which—in this case—led to hunger, wretchedness, and at last to murder. Viewed in any light, the Leob-Leopold studies demonstrate, in exaggerated form, the dissociation, the want of "affect," the lovelessness, which is increasingly the character of our times.

Psychiatry and court procedure involving psychiatric considerations have come a long way since 1924, but not so far that accounts like Mr. Levin's are superfluous. Even without the author's concluding interpretations, which are highly Freudian, his book offers material for serious consideration.

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The Hands of Youth

MOLESWORTH'S GUIDE TO THE ATOMIC AGE. By Geoffrey Willans and Ronald Searle. Vanguard. $2.75.

By PATRICIA DONEGAN

TRYING to review *Molesworth's Guide to the Atomic Age* is like trying to survey the debris left by an avalanche. The damage is done, and in Nigel Molesworth's usual ebullient and devastating fashion. It is left for the reader only to make sure that this book is always handy, kept in a convenient place, so that its pungent comments may illuminate any number of experiences the ordinary human may encounter—horse racing, for instance, or culture, outer space, commando training, summer vacations, or, as Molesworth puts it, "gurls."

For those not already familiar with Nigel, the knowing hero of this newest Willans and Searle epic, he has appeared in two previous commentaries on human existence, *Down With Skool* and *How to be Topp*. In a most accurate description of this horrendous adolescent, John P. Sisk called him "an irreverent and anarchic adolescent of uncertain age who fits into the human picture somewhere between Dennis the Menace and Attila the Hun." Certainly Ronald Searle's irreverent pen manages to catch this unusual hybrid in the drawings, and it would be as difficult to imagine Willans without Searle as Dickens without Cruikshank.

Nigel, his brother Molesworth 2 and several other "weeds," as the hero calls them, are active participants in "st. custard's Skool," and Nigel himself is not only a lively commentator on the contemporary scene but has a few philosophical insights into the future. He foresees, in this atomic age, the time when oafs will be oeufs and the "oeufs of the future, however, are fitted with the much superior Mark IV electronick brane and you can imagine wot it is like in skool." He translates Dickens in terms of the welfare state, conducts a dissertation on horseracing, "A Few Tips from the Coarse," and delivers himself of some wonderfully funny comments on TV.

"Gosh super! We hav something to contend with which no other generation hav ever had before i.e. the television cheers cheers cheers." With his usual backhanded irreverence, he punches large holes in the pomposity of the critics and then makes fun of the objects of their criticism. There is a kind of Gargantuan sweep to Nigel's humor which lays low, with great glee, everything in its path. In this wonderful chapter, which is entitled "Hee-Hee for Tee-Vee," he says: "Yore mater and pater then sa weedy things. i will not hav one in the house. the programmes are simply terible, my dear. it is bad for children. it destroy the simple pursuits of leisure. Hem-Hem if they only knew what the simple pursuits of leisure were like potting stones at viliage oiks or teaching parot rude words they would not hesitate for a moment."

One of the most refreshing qualities of Nigel's "weedy" imagination is his ability to leap from subject to subject without any of the formal organization of the adult mind. There is the generosity of the adolescent in his scope, and the insight of the child in its ability to reduce posturing to what it is. This is a wild and "weedy" comment on the adult world, with no holds barred. Nigel's exuberant satire explores custom, industry, education, science and decries pomposity in any form. And his excuse for this is contained in the introduction when he says, "No one kno wot to do about anything at the moment so they sa the future is in the hands of YOUTH."

World of Optimists

THE LISBON EARTHQUAKE. By T. D. Kendrick. J. B. Lippincott. $4.

By THOMAS F. CURLEY

MOST PEOPLE know there was an earthquake in Lisbon in the mid-eighteenth century and that it had something to do with the writing of *Candide*. Sir Thomas

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Kendrick, the Director of the British Museum, has given us a short, precise account of the earthquake itself in his second chapter as well as a bibliographical note that will help anyone who wishes to read further in the subject.

I emphasize these values because one is led, by no less an authority than the author himself, to neglect them in favor of a concern ". . . with the related themes of eighteenth-century earthquake-theology and the end of optimism." And yet the study as a whole, as if taking its cue from the second chapter, is descriptive rather than critical. The first chapter tells of the earthquake fright in London in 1750, and the six chapters that follow chapter two present us with an abundance of detail on the European reaction to the catastrophe. "After the earthquake," Sir Thomas writes, "pessimism became a more familiar and understandable mood, while the undefeatably hopeful minds occupied themselves more and more with the idea of perfectibility, a gradual progress by man under God's providence towards a full happiness and perfection." He credits *Candide* with a significant part in this "revolution of thought."

Revolution of thought or of feeling? First of all optimism should be put in quotation marks. It was an optimism that recognized pain and evil as essential parts of the great and perfect chain of being. As Professor Lovejoy remarked, ". . . the more numerous and monstrous the evils to be explained, the greater was the triumph when the author of a theodicy explained them." This optimism was, in most minds of the time, inconsistent with any belief in progress; it was more than an apology, it was a celebration of the status quo. But not in all minds. From the earliest years of the century, and before, by Henry More, Addison and even Leibnitz himself, the Chain of Being, again in Lovejoy's words, was temporalized. "The *plenum formarum* came to be conceived by some, not as the inventory but as the program of nature, which is being carried out gradually and exceedingly slowly in the cosmic history." Nevertheless it is

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true that the evolutionism did not arrive at full flower until much later in the century and no doubt the Lisbon earthquake and *Candide* did much to make this possible by subverting a static optimism.

But it would be unfair and, worse, irrelevant to approach this book as a study in the history of ideas. The author is concerned with ideas, not in themselves, but as they impinged on popular thought, on the sermons and tracts and occasional poems that the earthquake provoked. At this he excels. The effect is like to that of a *tableau vivant*. There are the gamblers at White's, the bishops and lower clergy in London and Lisbon, the scientists and even a Jansenist exulting in proud Lisbon's fall. Among other iniquities was not Portugal a cradle of the Jesuits? Ergo, the earthquake was a blow specially directed against the Jesuits.

This age must seem very distant from our own. And yet it is, in retrospect, the quaint prologue to the swelling act that began with the French Revolution. The scene which Sir Thomas Kendrick has revived is in curious contrast to the rebellious movement that Camus has traced in *The Rebel*. *Candide* was the catalyst of the age of optimism. And yet Voltaire's children, quite contrary to his advice on the cultivation of one's garden, proceeded to outdo both God and nature in violence. The dynamisms that succeeded the stasis of eighteenth century thought were those of Sade and of Saint Just, of Hegel, Marx and Lenin. *"J'aime mieux planter, semer, bâtir et surtout être libre,"* wrote Voltaire. Few shared his preferences. Sir Thomas Kendrick's study is of a world where it was proper for philosophers to attempt to understand the world, not to change it.

REVIEWERS

Dachine Rainer, a frequent contributor, is a novelist and poet.

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Jean Holzhauer writes frequently for this magazine and others.

Patricia Donegan is a regular reviewer.

Thomas F. Curley is a New York novelist and critic.

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